



NEWS RELEASE

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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VIRGINIA'S PRODUCERS PLANTED LESS ACREAGE TO ROW CROPS IN 2000

Virginia's producers planted less overall acreage to row crops in 2000, but expect to harvest more hay acreage, according a survey conducted in early June by the Virginia Agricultural Statistics Service. The only crop to show an increase was soybeans.

Corn planting is on schedule this year despite having to plant in between rain showers. Corn producers intend to plant 470,000 acres, 30,000 acres or 6 percent less than 1999 and 1998. Corn harvested for grain is expected to total 300,000 acres which if realized would be 7 percent above last year. Soybeans increased 10,000 acres this year to 480,000 acres, 2 percent more than last year but 4 percent below 1998. By June 1, 39 percent of the soybean crop had been planted which was ahead of the five year average.

Tobacco harvested acreage devoted to flue, burley, and dark fired will be down in 2000. Flue-cured producers will harvest 17,000 acres this year compared to 26,000 acres last year. This 9,000 acre decrease is due to quota cuts and a large carryover from the 1999 crop and will once again be an all time record low for this crop. Burley producers plan to harvest 9,000 acres, 15 percent below 1999. Acres of dark fire cured tobacco is down 300 acres to 1300 in 2000. Sun tobacco acres remain unchanged from the initial forecast of 100 acres.

Virtually all of Virginia's cotton crop had been planted by June 1. Producers planted 110,000 acres this year which is down from the initial forecast of 115,000 acres, but equal to last year. Peanut producers in Virginia intend to plant 76,000 acres this year which is down 1,000 acres from last year.

Winter wheat acres seeded last fall for this season were 240,000 acres, down 14 percent from last year. Wheat producers are expecting to harvest 205,000 acres which is 35,000 acres less than last year. Barley seeded acreage increased 6 percent from last year at 85,000. Barley producers expect to harvest 65,000 acres this year compared to 60,000 harvested in 1999.

Virginia's hay producers intend to harvest 1,290,000 acres of hay in 2000. Alfalfa hay harvested acres remains unchanged from 1999 at 120,000. Other hay acres harvested increased from 1,150,000 in 1999 to 1,170,000 in 2000.

**CORN ACREAGE UP 3 PERCENT FROM 1999
SOYBEAN ACREAGE UP 1 PERCENT**

Corn planted for all purposes is estimated at 79.6 million acres, up 3 percent from last year. Growers expect to harvest 73.1 million acres for grain, up 4 percent from 1999. The corn acreage estimate was based on survey information collected between May 30 and June 19. Farmers responding to the survey indicated that 99 percent of the intended corn acreage had been planted at the time of the interview compared to an average of 96 percent for the past ten years.

The soybean planted area is estimated at 74.5 million acres, 1 percent above last year's acreage. Area for harvest is estimated at 73.5 million acres, up 1 percent from 1999. If realized, this will be the largest planted and harvested acreage on record. Planted acreage has consistently increased every year since 1990 when the soybean planted area totaled 57.8 million acres. Of the 31 soybean estimating States, growers in 16 States increased acreage, while growers in 14 States reduced area planted. West Virginia acreage estimates are included for the first time.

All wheat planted area is estimated at 62.9 million acres, up slightly from 1999. Harvested area is expected to total 54.4 million acres, up 1 percent from last year.

All Cotton plantings for 2000 are expected to total 15.6 million acres, 5 percent above last year. Upland cotton acreage is expected to total 15.4 million acres, up 5 percent from 1999. Growers planted 202,000 acres of American-Pima cotton, down 30 percent from 1999. Some acreage was prevented from being planted in the Southeast due to severe drought conditions. Conversely, Arkansas farmers were frustrated by rains during their optimum planting window and thus were not able to plant all of the acreage originally intended for cotton.

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